

CONTACT

CHRIST CHURCH HALTON
COLTON METHODIST CHURCH

Lent 2025 begins.

March 2025



Nicola's Letter

This month we enter the Season of Lent. Lent is a season where we are invited into a time of focus and concentration, of stopping to notice what matters most in life. Just as Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness before the joy and excitement of Easter. In our own lives, there are times we can experience our own wildernesses. The wilderness of long-term physical and/or mental illness. The wilderness of grieving for a loved one. The wilderness of losing our job/independence/security.

Yet in this wilderness, as we recognised, acknowledged and declared at Christmas – Emmanuel – God with us. God with us in the pain. God with us in our loss and sickness. God with us in the moments of joy. God with us in looking forward to a hopeful future.

As winter recedes, everything in our beautiful natural world starts to grow again. Bulbs produce flowers, trees release new leaves, birds build nests. Lines come to my mind from Isaiah 43: “See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.”

We are reminded that is the way with God. New life comes from old, or what seems dead. And if we take time to look, there is newness all around. I wonder whether we can perceive it?

There's newness in the way our churches are working more closely together.

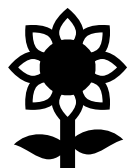
There's newness in our growing relationship with schools.

I wonder, can you name the newness in your own life?

So, this Lent, I invite us to recognise and acknowledge where we see newness in our churches, communities and world. And let us not be afraid to name it, share it and thank God for it.

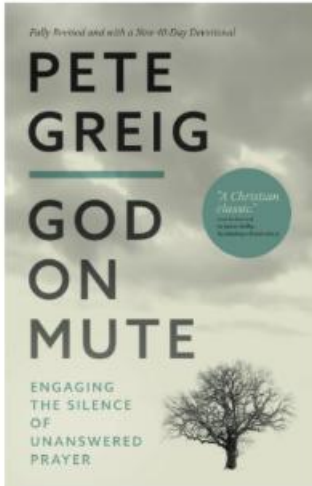
Love and peace,

Nicola





LEEDS URC PARTNERSHIP LENT COURSE



A 5 week course
exploring the
themes of Holy
Week and how
prayer can help
us process life's
hardest
questions.

Beginning on:

Tuesday 11 March, 10:30am, URC in South
Leeds, Dewsbury Road, LS11 5HR

Tuesday 11 March, 7:30pm, St Edmund's
Roundhay, Lidgett Park Road LS8 1JN

Wednesday 12 March, 7:30pm, Zoom,
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7019277749>

For more information, email:
revnicola.robinson@gmail.com

“Church - you're never too bad to come in and you're never
too good to stay out.”

A Service of Thanksgiving and 80th Birthday Celebration for Revd Marlene Wilkinson

Just a reminder that this will take place on Saturday 29th March at 3pm at Christ Church. The service will be followed by refreshments and a time of fellowship and catching up with some old friends. To help with catering, we are asking that if you intend to come please let Helen Lappage at Christ Church or Kathryn Glasby at Colton know by the 9th March.

Saints Alive Singers: we are having a short rehearsal on Sunday 23rd March at 6.15pm to run through the song 'All People That On Earth Do Dwell' for this service. It is in unison so no complicated parts, just bring your voice and enthusiasm as it will be good to have as many voices as possible.

The Unknown

By Pauline Hardman

Far away on another plane,
The realms of possibilities reign.
For all is possible in time and space,
Though not just for the human race.
Dimensions open to atmospheric waves,
no not the count of nights and days,
Philosophers yearn to succeed in the task,
But it's all beyond comprehension's grasp.
The laws of the spirit are not gravity bound,
And the loving sole can be all around.
The veil of divine powers shroud the proof,
For faith and love are the only truth.

Thought for March

**SPRING: the amazement that is always better than you dared
expect. - Pam Brown.**

Lent Reflections

During Lent, the Methodist Church is providing daily reflections for you to use. In the wilderness, Jesus reminded us that people don't live by bread alone. Each week during Lent, you can reflect on what sustains us, based on the lectionary Gospel passage for each Sunday. Sign up at:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/soul-food/>

We'll also be using a Lent Liturgy, across the churches, from the Soul Food resources.



**Are you passionate about caring
for creation/our environment?**

**LET'S BRING FOLK FROM ACROSS THE
LEEDS URC PARTNERSHIP TOGETHER TO
ENCOURAGE EACH ANOTHER, SHARE
IDEAS AND DISCUSS NEXT STEPS.**

**Please email -
revnicola.robinson@gmail.com**



Christ Church Guild

As we are almost halfway through February, the cold, wet days are becoming tiresome. I think I speak for many when I say that we're definitely looking forward to spring. There are signs in the garden, with snowdrops the first to put in an appearance and signs that bulbs are beginning to peep through; the evenings are getting lighter and the mornings are not quite as dark.

So far at Guild this year we have had an illustrated, personal journey along the Pilgrimage way from Porto to Santiago de Compostella with Frank Lee, and a very interesting historical tour of one of our famous parks here in Leeds, Roundhay Park. These evenings have been very well attended, and we learned so much – even the people who live very close to Roundhay Park said they had gathered more information about this treasure on their doorstep.

Many of the speakers we have choose to illustrate their talks with PowerPoint slides; their images often speak more than a hundred words. Through the generosity of a former member, we have invested in a new projector, which has proved to be money very well spent.

In March we are looking forward to a varied programme of speakers:

4th March – “I was a stranger and you invited me in”. (Matthew 25.35)

Rev'd Andy Muckle talks about his work as Chaplain to St. George's Crypt and as Bishop's Chaplain to the Homeless in the Diocese of Leeds.

11th March - From Prison to Palace

Former prison governor Veronica Bird tells us about her career in prisons, then working for royalty.

18th March – The Great American Song Book

Roger Browne brings an evening of music and stories.



25th March – How to Transform Your Garden

Joe Appleyard, from Tong Garden Centre, shares 45 years in horticulture, travelling the world.

Why not brighten up your Tuesday evening, learn what is happening in places we may never visit and enjoy an evening with friends, in fact bring a friend along too! - *Tony Pickles, Joint President with Peter Grubb*

Lent Giving at Colton

Last month we suggested that an alternative might be a **Carbon Fast** as a different way for us to mark Lent. It might help us to live more simply and find new ways to cut our own carbon footprint as a way of caring for God's creation.

This year during Lent we'd also like to take the opportunity to raise money for the **Toilet Twinning project** – so you might like to save a penny when you spend a penny! Labels are available from Colton Church, to fix to an empty jar in which to save your money. Please pass on any donations to Colton Church by 27th April.

If we raise £60, we can twin our church toilet and fund a project in a community that helps families to build their own basic toilet, access clean water and learn about hygiene – a vital combination that saves lives. You can find out more information about the work of the organisation at <https://toilettwinning.org/>

- Easter Offering envelopes will also be available at Colton on Palm Sunday and Easter Day, for donations to the Methodist Missions Fund.

Messy Church @ Christ Church

This month, Messy Church will be on Saturday 8th March from 2pm to 4pm, and we'll be thinking about Lent. We'll have the usual mix of crafts, singing, dancing and stories, with Andy leading our 'worship bit'. All ages are welcome, with a suggested donation of £1 per child on the door. To help with our catering, it would be great if you could let us know, via our Facebook page or by emailing Helen (details on the back page), if you're planning to come. Last month we welcomed 26 children, so why not help us get that number up even further?!



Plans for Future Church Services @ Colton

The last draft of the quarterly plan identified issues which will arise from September 2025 when there is one less presbyter in the circuit. This puts more pressure on Lay Preachers and supernumerary ministers who have been asked to try and fill in the many gaps.

Becki has been forward thinking on this issue and encouraged several meetings between church stewards, which we have attended, to consider different ways of worship including joint services or services at different times. The stewards at Colton have elected within this quarter and likely the next to do a local arrangement.

We realise that joint or different service arrangements are not 'everyone's cup of tea' but ask that you will work with us and 'give them a try'. All services will be respectful and held with reverence. All of the churches within the circuit are in the same situation. Colton have been working with the other churches to put together a plan which we hope you will embrace, and these are some of the upcoming changes to our usual worship routine:

30th March 10.30am - Joint service @ Cross Gates with Garforth, Christ Church, Scholes and Colton to celebrate Becki's return from Sabbatical. See the "Mothering Sunday" article elsewhere in this edition of Contact. (No worship at Colton).

13th April 12noon Palm Sunday - a Susannah's Table type service, including lunch (provided), followed by either a Prayer Walk, which we hope all ages will join, or a "Wednesday JAM" style session held in church, both with distribution of Palm Crosses.

27th April 10.30am - a service at Cross Gates which will be joined via Zoom from within Colton Church, or if you wish you can attend in person at Cross Gates. During the following quarter, we at Colton will no doubt be hosting joint services for the other churches to attend. Junior Church will continue to meet when it's not all age worship.

As stewards we are doing our best to engage with other churches whilst ensuring that Colton Church remains at the heart of the Colton Community.

Thank you - *Kathryn and Elaine (on behalf of the Colton Stewards)*

Colton Church Annual General Meeting 16th March

Worship on Sunday 16th March will be led by Revd Mark Stennett and will include Holy Communion. This will be immediately followed by our church AGM, chaired by Revd Mark, so you are invited to stay for a cuppa following worship and take part in the meeting. Please continue to give prayerful consideration of how you could contribute to the life of the church at Colton, as we will be spending some time exploring how we might spread the workload to ease the burden on individuals. A report booklet, covering various aspects of Colton Church, will be available prior to the meeting and there will then be opportunity for feedback on any of the reports. See Kathryn if you would like a printed copy of the report booklet.

A Cat's Worship of Nature's Promise

(From "Musings Of A Wayward Pilgrim" by Mark Zenick and reproduced with the author's kind permission.)

After two weeks of snow and sub-freezing temperatures, followed by ten days of strong winds, regular rain, leaden skies, this January morning has broken into bright, effusive sunshine. Our eighteen-year-old cat, Bootsie, quite arthritic and slow in movement, insists on going outside into the shiny day. She finds her way into our front garden where daffodil shoots have pushed their fresh green noses out of the ground.



She slides languidly onto the fresh earth not so long ago buried beneath snow. Proceeding to rub and roll among the many promises of renewed growth, Bootsie unashamedly caresses and is caressed by the fecundity of the awakening soil. This passion is so unselfconscious, so instinctive. She exults in the natural fact that the ripeness of spring is not so far away.

I watch her with amazement and pleasure, forced to admit that I envy her animal delight in the release of sunshine and in the celebratory communion with the rebirth of nature.

World Day of Prayer Service 7th March 2pm

We are pleased to be hosting this year's World Day of Prayer Service at Colton Methodist Church at 2pm on Friday 7th March. The theme is "I made you wonderful" and the service material has been prepared by Christian women in the Cook Islands. Refreshments will be served afterwards and all are warmly invited.

Colton Eco Church

The little things count in our Climate Change RACE!

When we think about Climate Change and wonder how we can join with our Church ambition to be carbon net zero by 2030, it can feel overwhelming. We can be at a loss as to what we can do. But every small change we make to do our bit to look after and heal God's earth counts towards making a big difference.

We're in a RACE to get to carbon net zero by 2030. We can get there by:

Reducing the amount of carbon we use

Adapting our behaviours to prevent further climate change

Capturing more carbon

Engaging our family and friends to join us in the Climate Change RACE

Here are a few small things that you could do which will all add up to making a big difference, getting us closer to our RACE finish line!

- ☐ Only boil the water you need when making your cuppa
- ☐ Don't leave electrical devices on standby – turn them off at the wall
- ☐ When you leave a room with no one else in it, turn the lights off
- ☐ Dress in layers to keep yourself warm, not the space around you
- ☐ Instead of running the tap to get the water cold, keep a jug of water in the fridge to keep it colder for longer
- ☐ Run your washing machine or dishwasher on the lowest temperature settings
- ☐ Go peat free in the garden
- ☐ Take a reusable water bottle or mug for hot drinks with you – some coffee shops even give you a discount when you use your own mug!

Though you may be doing some of these things already, what's the extra small thing you can do this week to help look after the earth God gave us? - *Colton Eco Church Team.*

Revd Becki's Sabbatical

A reminder that Becki is on sabbatical leave until 26th March 2025. Revd Mark Stennett will cover anything at Colton that requires a minister during this time. For any support, please contact the senior stewards at Colton (Kathryn Glasby or Elaine Preston) in the first instance or let them know if there's something that you feel needs to be dealt with during Becki's absence or noted for her return.

A UNITED LENT BIBLE STUDY COURSE

When faced with times of Crisis or challenge, many turn to self-help for support. But what about Christians – how can we find strength not merely in self-help but in God's help?

A Way through the Wilderness is a five-session course by Paula Gooder, which explores God's promise to comfort his people as they struggle through life's wildernesses.



Each session focuses on an aspect of God's comfort, based on a short passage from Isaiah.

At Barwick Methodist Church
Wednesdays 2.30 - 3.30pm
March 12th, 19th, 26th & April 2nd, 9th

Mothering Sunday 30th March

Morning worship will be a joint service at Cross Gates Methodist Church at 10.30am for Christ Church Halton, Colton, Cross Gates, Garforth and Scholes Churches. Come along to Cross Gates to sing some "Assembly Bangers"* followed by a cuppa and some cake to celebrate Mothering Sunday and to welcome Revd Becki back from her sabbatical!

(* those favourite hymns from our school days, for the uninitiated – Ed)

COLTON PLANT SALE

SATURDAY 10TH MAY – 10AM TO 12 NOON

Please make a note in your diary of this year's Colton Plant Sale! If anyone is able to help at the Plant Sale either on the day and/or on the Friday afternoon for set up, it would be much appreciated. Please also save any newspapers or bags you may have and bring them to church nearer the time. If you can help in any way please advise Alison, David or Jenny at Colton.

WOW Concert (Wakefield Wind Orchestra)



Music from shows, TV and more
Saturday April 5th 2pm to 4pm @
Colton Methodist Church.



Tickets £7 (including refreshments) available in advance
(but please note, children go free).

Contact Elaine on 07760737515
or David 0113 2253894

Ticket proceeds to be shared between the orchestra
and Colton Church.

JAM @ Colton

Jesus And Me

A reminder of the sessions running at Colton, Wednesday JAM and Family JAM.

Wednesday JAM on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month, immediately after the Wednesday Coffee Morning (which runs weekly 10.30am to 11.30am). A time for sharing (and it's free!). We share:

- a light lunch (soup and a roll)
- a prayer for ourselves and each other
- an episode from the life of Jesus
- a quiet conversation about what we've just heard
- a favourite hymn
- the Lord's prayer

Just come along to find out more!

Family JAM runs on the 4th Sunday of each month, 4pm to 6pm.

Next session Sunday 23rd March (No session in April)

What is it? An informal time of gathering, hearing a Bible story, responding using craft, creativity & conversation, a short time of prayer & song, then eating a meal together.

Who is it for? Everyone! This is especially suitable for families with children aged 4-12, but everyone is most welcome, whether you have children in your family or not.

What does it cost? It's totally free!

To find out more and to book a space please email:

info.coltonchurch@gmx.co.uk, message our Facebook page "Colton Methodist Church, Leeds" or pop a note through the church letterbox.

Further Update on Stationing

Further to the information in February's Contact, we can now add that Revd Nigel Wright has been stationed to the Circuit from September 2025, to cover Barwick, Newbourne and Oakwood Churches. We give thanks to God for prayers answered, with all the appointments the Circuit was seeking for September 2025 now filled.



Forthcoming Services at Christ Church

2 March	Rev Angela Hughes
9 March	Mr Richard Vautrey
16 March	Rev Edward Sakwe Holy Communion
23 March	Rev Nicola Robinson
30 March	Rev Becki Stennett (at Cross Gates Methodist Church)
6 April	Mrs Anne Vautrey

Happy Birthday Marlene!

Warm birthday wishes to Revd Marlene Wilkinson who celebrated her 80th Birthday in February. Just a reminder that the Thanksgiving service, to continue her celebrations, will be held at Christ Church Halton, on Saturday 29th March 2025, at 3.00pm. See also the separate article in this month's Contact.

Next Month's "Contact"

The next edition of Contact will be published on 6 April. Please let Andy have any articles or contributions for next month's issue by 7pm on Tuesday 1 April. Many thanks.
andybirkett76@gmail.com or 07952 861316.

Don't forget you can now find a digital edition of Contact online at the Colton and Christ Church pages of the Circuit website.

Forthcoming Services at Colton

2 March	Parade Service All-Age Worship
9 March	Rev Tom Ferguson
16 March	Rev Mark Stennett Holy Communion
23 March	10.30am – Dr Karen Illingworth 4.00pm – Family JAM (Jesus and Me)
30 March	Rev Becki Stennett (at Cross Gates Methodist Church)
6 April	Rev Becki Stennett All-age Worship

Additional Services

- Tuesday 4th March 10.45am – Prayers, Praise and Pastries at Tranquility Court MHA
- Ash Wednesday Service 5th March 7pm at Cross Gates Methodist Church, to mark the beginning of Lent. Led by Rev Norma Davey.
- Every Thursday, 1.30pm – Free Church Service at St Gemma's Hospice



(See Genesis 1:1-2:3)

07-18-2014

LIGHT, DARK, SKY, WATER, SUN, MOON,
STARS, PLANTS, FISH, BIRDS, ANIMALS,
AND MAN IN MY IMAGE ... I NEED A DAY
OFF AFTER THAT WEEK

Senior Steward

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Rev Becki Stennett (Colton)

(On Sabbatical until 26th March)